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SUBJECT: INDIA REJECTS UNSC BRIEFING ON NEPAL AS WELL AS UN
ROLE IN MONITORING CEASE-FIRE

REF: A. NEW DELHI 3382

[¶](#)B. KATHMANDU 1263

[¶](#)C. KATHMANDU 1202

Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

[¶](#)11. (C) Summary. During a May 16 meeting on Nepal hosted by UK PermRep to the UN Sir Emry Jones Parry and attended by Special Adviser to SYG Annan Vijay Nambiar and USUN Deputy PermRep Wolff -- but not Indian PermRep Nirupam Sen, who decided at the last minute not to attend -- the UK pushed for an expanded role for the United Nations to monitor the cease-fire between the Maoists and the Government of Nepal (GON), supervise Maoist disarmament, and provide assistance to the upcoming Nepalese constituent assembly. Observing that the UN Secretariat might need authorization for such an enlarged role, Jones Parry proposed that the UN Security Council receive a briefing on Nepal under "other matters" in about two weeks' time. Nambiar agreed with Ambassador Wolff that the GON should first request UN assistance before any further action is taken, although he averred that "there should be external monitoring of the cease-fire" and that in this regard there "may be a role for the UN." After briefing Indian Mission to the UN PolMinCounselor Harsh Shringla on the May 16 meeting, Poloff heard back from Shringla on May 17 -- who had spoken overnight with New Delhi -- that India believed UN monitoring of the cease-fire in Nepal was "completely unnecessary." Ruling out any UN mediation effort in Nepal, Shringla averred that the UN should focus on fully supporting the political parties and on mobilizing international economic assistance to the GON. While he said India could envisage a possible future UN role in supporting Nepal's elections, Shringla said such a decision now would be premature. Accordingly, Shringla confirmed that India would oppose any UNSC discussion of Nepal. Praising U.S.-India cooperation on Nepal, Shringla called for continued coordination on this issue in New York and in capitals. End Summary.

Ill-Fated Follow-Up to December Meeting

[¶](#)12. (SBU) Jones Parry described the May 16 meeting as a follow-up to a December 2005 discussion between himself, Indian PR Sen, UN Special Adviser Brahimi, and Ambassador Bolton on the situation in Nepal. Since Brahimi retired at the end of 2005, Special Adviser to SYG Annan (and former Indian Deputy National Security Advisor) Vijay Nambiar attended for the UN Secretariat and Ambassador Wolff represented USUN. Noting that Sen had been reluctant to

attend the first meeting, Jones Parry speculated that the Indian PR only agreed to attend the second session because he was asked at the same time as Nambiar and could not refuse in the presence of his fellow Indian (and now UN) colleague. The Indian PR, however, ultimately did not attend the meeting due to difficulties gaining access to the UK Mission. Despite Sen's absence, the meeting continued with Nambiar in the awkward position of effectively having to represent the views of both the UN Secretariat and India on the situation in Nepal.

UK: UNSC Briefing in Two Weeks

¶3. (SBU) Jones Parry outlined three broad challenges facing Nepal: to "get its politics right," focus on economic development, and ensure security. Noting that India had rejected any outside mediation in Nepal's political process, Jones Parry agreed with Nambiar that the international community should allow Nepalis to pursue their political dialogue on their own. The British PR therefore suggested that the international community could focus its efforts in Nepal on monitoring the cease-fire between the Maoists and the GON, on Maoist disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), and on assistance to the upcoming Nepalese constituent assembly. Recognizing that the degree to which the international community becomes involved "should depend on what the Nepalis want," Jones Parry nonetheless implied throughout the discussion that the international community -- and particularly the UN -- should play a role in Nepal's transition. He wondered whether the UN Secretariat could expand its role in Nepal upon the decision of SYG Annan or if consultations with the Security Council would be necessary. Recalling that SYG Annan had agreed during a lunch with UNSC members on May 10 to provide a report on

Nepal to the Council under the "other matters" agenda item, Jones Parry said he expected such a UNSC briefing in about two weeks' time, at which point he hoped it would be clear whether the GON had requested UN assistance.

Nambiar Puts on His Indian Hat...

¶4. (SBU) Cautioning that he had left the GOI several months ago and disclaiming any expertise on Nepal, Nambiar nevertheless offered an assessment of recent developments there based in part on his discussions with Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran several weeks ago. Noting how much

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public support for the King had shrunk recently, Nambiar opined that the Maoists would try to maximize their political influence due to their conviction that there was more now "give" in the political situation than before. The SYG's Special Adviser nevertheless predicted the Maoists would adhere to their alliance with the political parties, but he underscored the importance of preventing them from intimidating their political counterparts or ordinary Nepalese citizens. Nambiar averred that the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) would have little choice but to report to the cabinet rather than the King. Asked about possible external support for the Maoists, Nambiar characterized connections with the Indian Naxalite movement as "tenuous" due to the more tribal-based politics of rural India. While he acknowledged that certain Indian political parties had offered "ideological" support to the Nepalese Maoists, he discounted the possibility of any material support. As for China, Nambiar observed that the PRC had been "almost critical" of the movement to which it refers -- as a self-protecting euphemism -- as "Nepalese anti-government forces."

...And Then His Blue Helmet

¶5. (SBU) Speaking on behalf of the UN Secretariat, Nambiar agreed that "there should be external monitoring of the

cease-fire" and that in this regard there "may be a role for the UN." He predicted that India would "be hesitant" about UNSC discussion of Nepal, but agreed that the UN would "need some angle" in order to expand its role in the country.

Dodging Jones Parry's question about why India would oppose such a briefing, Nambiar agreed with Ambassador Wolff that the GON should first make a clear, public request for UN assistance. The SYG's Special Adviser did argue, perhaps in defense of India's reluctance to consider UNSC action on Nepal, that the "balance of opinion" in the UN was more critical of the RNA than the Maoists -- and that this "should now be corrected." Nambiar outlined three obstacles to the country's successful political transition: disagreements between the seven main political parties, a lack of trust in Maoist intentions, and Maoist disarmament. Based on this analysis, he concluded that there could be a role for the international community in supporting "security arrangements" between the GON and the Maoists, supervising disarmament, and in providing electoral assistance. If Nepal requested UN assistance, Nambiar opined the UN would likely adopt a phased approach focused initially on monitoring the cease-fire with other possible tasks to follow, rather than attempt to undertake all of aforementioned functions at once.

¶6. (SBU) Nambiar noted that Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Under Secretary-General (U/SYG) Gambari looked forward to hearing the results of DPA official Tamrat Samuel's visit to Nepal and India, during which Samuel was supposed to gauge interest in an expanded UN role, upon Samuel's return to New York on May 22. In response to a question from Jones Parry about possible follow-up UN visits to the region, Nambiar said he was not sure if Gambari wanted to visit Nepal at the end of his current trip to Burma. If Gambari could not visit Kathmandu soon, Nambiar suggested that DPA Asia Division Director Michael Williams might make a stop there en route to his planned visit to Beijing in the next few weeks.

India (Belatedly) Rejects a UN Role

¶7. (SBU) Following the May 16 meeting at the UK Mission, Poloff gave Indian Mission to the UN Political MinCounselor Harsh Shringla a quick briefing on the discussion the Indians had just missed. After speaking overnight with Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Joint Secretary Pankaj

Saran, Shringla met Poloff on May 17 to explain India's reaction. Describing a UN role in monitoring a cease-fire between the Maoists and the GON as "completely unnecessary," Shringla averred that the UN should focus its efforts in Nepal on expressing full support for the political parties and in mobilizing international economic assistance to the GON. (Note: Poloff referred to reftel discussions in New Delhi to clarify if India opposed even a UN role in monitoring the cease-fire, but Shringla said Saran was clear on this point. End Note.) The UN, Shringla observed, could assist the political process by helping to "maintain unity among the parties" -- but without taking on any sort of mediation role. The Indian diplomat argued that the UN serving as a mediator would imply "parity" between the GON and the Maoists, which he said both India and the USG reject.

Shringla further observed that the UN should tell the Maoists in no uncertain terms that they must renounce violence and accept whatever results emerge from the constituent assembly. While India could "envisage" a possible UN role in supporting Nepal's elections, Shringla cautioned that such a decision was now "premature" because elections were at least 10-12 months away. Accordingly, Shringla said India thought any UNSC discussion of Nepal would be unnecessary. Throughout the discussion, Shringla emphasized that the GON should decide what kind of role the international community should play in Nepal.

¶8. (C) Expressing appreciation for Poloff's briefing on the May 16 session at the UK Mission, Shringla noted that British PR Jones Parry -- in his conversation with Indian PR Sen after the ill-fated meeting -- had only discussed a possible role for the UN in Nepal without any mention of a UNSC

briefing. Shringla privately complained that the British were repeating their earlier tactic of trying to pressure India into accepting a greater UN role in Nepal, but he warned that the UK would not be able to force such a decision over Indian objections. Noting that Saran had just met with SCA PDAS Donald Camp in New Delhi, Shringla said the MEA believed the U.S. and India shared similar views on Nepal and appealed for continued coordination in New York.

BOLTON